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USDA'S REPORT TO CONSUMERS

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THE GREAT AMERICAN FARM

The Way It Works. Peas do not grow in cans nor are they produced frozen in packages. Everyone knows that. But canned or frozen peas are the only kinds of peas many children ever see. Urban children especially may not understand or appreciate that what they find packaged, cooked, and ready to eat in the supermarket had its origin on an American farm. "The Great American Farm," a new USDA activity program for fourth, fifth and sixth grade students, provides some basic information on agricultural production that affects the supply and cost of the food they eat. The students learn about the farmer's place in the U.S. economy and about some of his problems and achievements. Included in the program are four activity masters which reproduce at least 200 copies each, a teacher's guide, and a large wall chart which even alone can stand as an attractive information piece on farming. Also included is a list of USDA publications on food and agriculture suitable for classroom use. Single free copies of the program activity may be obtained from: The Great American Farm, Box 385, Vandalia, Ohio 45377.

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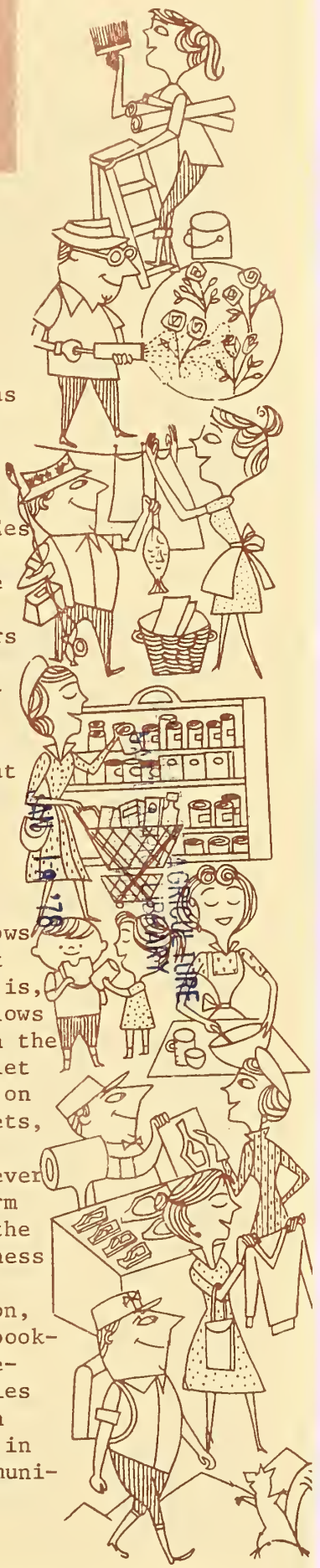
PEOPLE ON THE FARM

The Way It Is In Iowa. Corn grows well in Iowa. In fact, corn grows so well in Iowa and its neighboring states in the East-Central part of the country, that the area is known as the Corn Belt. And corn is, along with its many other uses, the main feed for hogs. So it follows that where corn does well, so do hogs. The point is illustrated in the third booklet in USDA's "People On The Farm" series. The new booklet is about the John Miller family whose corn and hogs are doing well on their farm in Iowa. As in the previous "People On The Farm" booklets, the new one tells what it's like to live on and operate a modern American farm--an experience that the majority of Americans have never had. The John Millers of Cedar Falls, Iowa, are typical of the farm families who run a corn and hog farm where they grow corn to feed the hogs and grow the hogs for market. The booklet discusses the business end of the farm, the problems, the risks, the planning, and the profits--graphically showing that to keep his farm a going operation, Miller must be a businessman in every sense of the word. But the booklet also tells of the pleasures, satisfactions and interesting lifestyle the Millers enjoy as a close-knit American farm family. Copies of "People On The Farm: Corn and Hog Farming"--as well as those on "Dairying" and on "Broiler Growing"--are available free, singly or in quantity, from Special Reports Division, Room 460-A, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.



NEW YEARBOOK OF AGRICULTURE

A Hotbed of Information. The time to plan next year's garden is right after this year's harvest. So says the 1977 Yearbook of Agriculture,"Gardening for Food and Fun". With this sage observation, plus some 400 pages of practical advice, detailed instructions, and helpful tips, the new Yearbook can be a valuable guide for all types of home gardeners--from the beginner to the proficient. "Introduction to Gardening," the first of the book's four sections, includes chapters on selecting a garden site and the proper tools and equipment; dealing with climate, soils, and pests; and other garden planning and coping activities. The next two sections, "Home Garden Vegetables" and "Fruits and Nuts," have chapters on growing a wide variety of produce--from asparagus to zucchini; apples to walnuts. Logically, the final section is "Home Food Preservation". Using the new Yearbook as a guide, a gardener could conceivably have home-grown soup-to-nuts meals almost year round. Copies of "Gardening for Food and Fun" may be purchased for $6.50 each from the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D.C., 20402 or from government bookstores. The stock number is 001-000-03679-3. Also, each member of Congress is supplied with limited numbers of copies for free distribution. USDA does not have any copies for public distribution or sale.

HAVE YOU EVER WONDERED. . .

Why Are We Selling Our Food Overseas? We are, you know, even more now than we used to. We are selling foreign countries three times as many dollars worth of American farm products as we were five years ago. Have you ever asked yourself the "whys" and "wherefores" of it all--or been asked and couldn't supply the answers? Then you likely will be interested in knowing of a new USDA leaflet that concisely answers these questions and many others you may or may not have thought to ask. After all, farm exports have been in the news for some years and we are all affected, directly indirectly, by whether or not the U.S. sells food overseas. Teachers of social studies, economics, consumer education and other classes will find the leaflet a useful resource in classroom studies and discussions. Copies of the publication, "Why Are We Selling Our Food Overseas?", are available free from Special Reports Division, Room 459-A, Office of Communication, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D.C. 20250.

BE KIND TO BEES

Where Would We Be Without Bees? Bees, even without being mentioned in association with birds, are well up on the list of mankind's most important friends. One obvious reason, of course, is that they produce honey, an accomplishment that deserves at least an "important friend" rating. Then, there is their ability to produce beeswax, not one of our most important products, but one that gets used in all sorts of things and ways. But bees contribute to our well-being even more: They pollinate. A few other insects spread pollen as they visit blossoms, but the honey bee is the most efficient and the only dependable pollinator. About 15 percent of the plant-derived food we eat comes from plants dependent upon or benefited by insect pollination. Most of the livestock products we eat are produced from animals which once consumed insect-pollinated plants. So, one way or another--about one-third of our diet comes from insect-pollinated crops. You might want to consider inviting a bee to lunch. After all, he helped produce it.

SERVICE is a monthly newsletter of consumer interest. It is designed for those who report to the individual consumer rather than for mass distribution. For information about items in this issue, write Lillie Vincent, Editor of Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Special Reports Division, Room 459-A, Washington, D.C. 20250, or Telephone 202-447-5437.